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**PRESS RELEASE  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Alaska National Guard

**August 13, 2014**

By Staff Sgt. Michael Buck, 103<sup>rd</sup> CST

**103<sup>rd</sup> Civil Support Team trains, learns war history in Unalaska**

**UNALASKA, Alaska** – Twenty Alaska National Guard members from the 103<sup>rd</sup> Civil Support Team – Weapons of Mass Destruction are here training with local emergency services personnel and also learning about the Aleutian Islands Campaign from World War II.

The 103<sup>rd</sup> CST, alongside the Unalaska Department of Public Safety, Division of Fire & Emergency Medical Services, is conducting hazardous material decontamination training and participating in a joint hazardous materials emergency drill. The 103<sup>rd</sup> CST serves as the state's all hazard chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear specialists who work in concert with local first responders in hazardous materials situations. As subject matter experts, the CST routinely travels to all parts of the state to train and work with first responders.

In addition to the hazmat training, the leadership of the 103<sup>rd</sup> took the opportunity to provide some professional development on the Aleutian Islands Campaign for the unit's Soldiers and Airmen.

The Aleutian Islands Campaign, often called "The Forgotten War," serves as a platform to educate people on Alaska's history. The Aleutian islands were invaded and occupied by Japanese troops until the United States countered the occupation and re-took the islands. Unalaska and Attu were two sites where the United States and Japan battled for control of the Aleutians.

Visiting Unalaska and Dutch Harbor provided members of the 103<sup>rd</sup> CST valuable insight into the Aleutian Islands Campaign. A local expert and educator, Jeff Dickrell, provided a detailed tour of the island to include the old site of Fort Mears and the multitude of defensive fighting positions that dotted the emerald mountainsides. The unit saw magazine bunkers, gun emplacements and communication buildings.

In addition, three CST members researched and briefed the unit on the Aleutian Islands Campaign and battles that occurred on Dutch Harbor and Attu.

The briefings and tour on Unalaska "gives us a greater appreciation of where we came from," said Sgt. Paul Oliver, a survey team leader, 103<sup>rd</sup> CST. "It connects us to the lineage and history of the military in Alaska; unfortunately, it is not as widely known as other battles in the Pacific."

103<sup>rd</sup> CST members said they gained a good understanding of how the battles of WWII and the Aleutian Islands Campaign shaped today's Alaska National Guard. For them, learning about the events that occurred, the tactics employed, and the men and women involved, instills a knowledge of our Alaskan heritage and ensures this campaign is never forgotten.

The Guardsmen flew to Unalaska Aug. 10 onboard an Alaska Air National Guard C-130 Hercules and will be here until Aug. 15.

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Photo Cutlines:

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Members of the Alaska National Guard 103rd Civil Support Team – Weapons of Mass Destruction visit the Aleutian World War II National Historic Area Aug. 11. The unit traveled to Unalaska to conduct hazardous materials training with local first responders, and while there, they took the opportunity to learn about the attack on Dutch Harbor and the Aleutian Campaign during World War II. Photo: Tech. Sgt. Melissa Sullivan, 103<sup>rd</sup> Civil Support Team

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Members of the Alaska National Guard 103rd Civil Support Team – Weapons of Mass Destruction tour various World War II military sites, including the anti-aircraft gun position seen here, around Unalaska Aug. 11. The unit traveled to Unalaska to conduct hazardous materials training with local first responders, and while there, they took the opportunity to learn about the attack on Dutch Harbor and the Aleutian Campaign during World War II. Photo: Tech. Sgt. Melissa Sullivan, 103<sup>rd</sup> Civil Support Team